

I am the Executive Director of Kinship Partners Inc, www.kinshippartners.org a youth mentoring organization whose mission since 1986 has been to provide positive role models and guidance to at-risk youth in Crow Wing and southern Cass counties of Minnesota. We achieve this mission through one-on-one mentoring and year-round group activities. Through a careful matching process, facilitated by our qualified staff, waiting children are paired with caring adults in the community. By involving these children and teens (age 4-18) in Kinship Partners, we are encouraging them to become positive, productive adults in our society. The majority of the children we serve come from single-family homes or dysfunctional families.

The mission of Kinship Partners has been achieved in part due to the support of BL Broadcasting, Inc.(WJJY-FM, KLIZ-FM/The Power Loon, KBLB-FM/B93.3, KUAL-FM/Cool 103.5) Below are just a few examples of the support we have received from BL Broadcasting Inc.

Mentor Recruitment:

In the past few months our organizations has experienced a growth of 30 percent due in part to our "100 Mentors in 100 Days" mentor recruitment campaign. The goal of the project was to recruit 100 mentors for children on our mentor waiting list. The following articles from the Brainerd Dispatch will confirm the success of this campaign.

"Kinship Partners' successful 100 mentors/100 days mentor recruitment campaign was one of the more inspiring stories of this Christmas season in the Brainerd lakes area.

Months ago, Executive Director David Downing announced what many thought was an awfully ambitious goal. In an effort to decrease the list of young people who were looking for Kinship Partners, his organization would try to recruit 100 mentors in 100 days. They met their goal a few weeks ago.

Kinship Partners finished with 107 new mentors after a last-minute blitz which saw more than 30 new mentors signed up in the final 12 days. Kinship Partners serves Crow Wing and southern Cass counties, striving to provide positive role models for young people who are referred to the program by teachers, counselors, pastors and parents. The young people range between the ages of 5 and 15." From Brainerd Dispatch editorial Dec 22 2007

BL Broadcasting was instrumental in the success of this campaign. They produced and aired, at no cost to Kinship Partners, 12 different public service announcements promoting the mentor campaign. In addition there DJ staff promoted the drive daily on the air and stepped up its coverage during the last minute blitz which was crucial in us meeting our mentor recruitment goal.

Coats for Kids:

Kinship Partners has partnered with BL Broadcasting for the past 17 years in a children's winter

clothing drive each fall called 'Coats for Kids'. We annually distribute between 1,200 and 1,500 winter jackets, hats and pairs of mittens to the less fortunate in the Brainerd Lakes area. This program benefits at least 1,000 needy youth each winter. BL Broadcasting promotes the drive on the air asking community members for donations of gently used warm coats, boots, hats, mittens and scarves. In addition the staff of BL Broadcasting is responsible to deliver the coats to Kinship Partners so we can distribute them to the needy.

We experienced more need of coats and winter outerwear in 2007 than in any previous year. Over 250 parents and their children were lined up before the doors open for the distribution. Due to the current state of the economy we anticipate a much greater need in 2008 and are already planning and preparing to do our best to meet this challenge. A change in FCC regulations on how stations serve the community could limit this much needed 'Coats for Kids' service to the less fortunate in the Brainerd Lakes area.

Fundraising:

Kinship Partners operates solely on community contributions. We do not charge a fee for our service or receive any funding from the federal, state or local governments. BL Broadcasting (WJJY-FM, KLIZ-FM/The Power Loon, KBLB-FM/B93.3, KUAL-FM/Cool 103.5) and its employees actively support all of our fundraising efforts. This effort includes sponsoring our "Hoop Shoot" booth at the builders show and promoting and providing master of ceremonies for our Taste of the Lakes fundraising event. They have always gone above and beyond to assist us with raising financial support for our much needed youth mentoring program.

In conclusion BL Broadcasting (WJJY-FM, KLIZ-FM/The Power Loon, KBLB-FM/B93.3, KUAL-FM/Cool 103.5) is the idea community radio partner to the people of the Brainerd Lakes area and is a model of what community radio should be. I'm deeply concerned that any new FCC regulations will only hinder the hard work that BL Broadcasting already does in this community and could ultimately have a negative effect on Kinship Partners and the children and families we serve. Thank you for your time and please contact me if you need any additional information.

David Downing, Executive Director Kinship Partners
(218) 829-4606 mail@kinshippartners.org